Incidents of religious conversions

3007. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to growing incidence of religious conversion being organized especially among the poor citizens in backward regions of our country demonstrating close link between the proselytizers and Western Churches;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto;

(c) whether Government are contemplating to take any special measures to facilitate rapid socio-economic development in the backward regions especially with a view to creating an environment [illegible] allurement/inducement of the poors to convert;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) to (e) There have been reports from time to time regarding allegations that foreign missionaries are engaging themselves in religious conversions by offering inducements.

'Public Order' and 'Police' are the State subjects under the Constitution of India and hence prevention, detection, registration, investigation and prosecution of crimes are primarily the concerns of the State Governments/UT Administrations. Action is taken as per existing laws by the law enforcing agencies whenever instances of violation come to notice.

Some State Governments have enacted laws providing for prohibition of conversion from one religious faith to any other religious faith by use of force or inducement or by fraudulent means etc.

The National Common Minimum Programme of the Government is committed to provide full equality of opportunity in education and employment for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and implement programmes for the social and economic development of the poorest and most backward districts of the country on a priority basis.